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Ruby Denies Ever Knowing Lee Oswald

Fifth in a Series

By Jack Ruby
And William Read Woodfield

DALLAS — The following is the first of a two-part interview of Jack Ruby, who is to be tried in Dallas for the murder of Lee Oswald.

Q: Did you ever know Lee Harvey Oswald?

A: I never saw him in the Carousel Club, never in the world, at any time. The master of ceremonies at the club, Bill DeMarr, said he thought he had seen Oswald at the club but now he denies he ever saw him. It was such a shock to me because Bill has such a wonderful memory.

I never heard Oswald's name and I usually greet customers at the club by name.

Someone even said I once had an apartment next to Oswald but this is absolutely not true.

Q: Why did you carry a gun?

A: I've been cut at, knifed at and the only way to get respect in Dallas is to carry a gun and the thugs and hoodlums know it. Hoods can cause all kinds of trouble. They get put in jail and get out the next morning with a mere $10 fine. That's the way it is in Dallas and that's why I carried a gun, to protect my business and my money. I have no permit—they know it—but they know all night club owners carry guns. You have to carry a gun. Dallas is like a jungle.

Q: What are your feelings toward the Dallas police and how do they feel towards you?

A: I love the Dallas police. I love the Department. I love to hang around there. They handle civil rights with less fuss than any town.

We often have off-duty policemen working in the Carousel to keep order. They get $7 per night. This is common. Christmas, cops get whisky. But the police never have their hands out in Dallas. They get a special price on beer in the club—40 cents instead of 60 cents—but they don't drink while they're on duty. And I don't make them pay the cover charge to come in. I never ask an officer to do special favors for me.

I pass our permanent guest cards for the Carousel to certain people to use any night but Saturday and Sunday. I give these cards to the police. It's public relations. Bill Alexander, the Deputy District Attorney who is prosecuting me, has a complimentary card. Bill and I were great friends—that is, until he brought a prosecution psychiatrist, Dr. Holbrook, to jail to examine me. It hurts to have your faith shaken in your friends. Then, after that, Bill came back with another doctor but I wouldn't see him. I remembered that Dr. Holbrook talked to me for about an hour. He didn't have a stenographer or a tape machine and we didn't get into talking about the shooting at all.

Three days before the shooting, Bill Alexander told me he heard I was upset because a competitor was hiring Candy Barr (an exotic dancer), bringing her back to Dallas. She was run out of Dallas after serving a jail sentence. Bill said, "If you know anybody she's running with that's wrong, you let me know and nobody will ever know you told me." It was then I gave him the complimentary card to the Carousel. Bill took it, signed his name and I took it back to have it plastic-coated for him. Now the card is missing. They searched my office and confiscated it. Bill told Captain Fritz, "See that Jack gets his rights." The next day he came in with the psychiatrists.

What a friend!

Q: Let's get back to your police record. Have you ever been arrested for anything other than fighting?

A: They were mostly minor fights. I had a little trouble with the liquor men. Then I was in traffic court and was pulled in for carrying a gun. Even though I know many of the officers, I never asked anyone to dismiss a case against me. Only once did I ever have trouble with an officer. He tried to rough me up. I hit him with my pistol and when I apologized to the Captain, he told me to forget it. They didn't want cops like this one on the force.

Q: Have you ever been involved in pandering?

A: Absolutely not. I never took a prostitution dime. I never pushed prostitutes at all. I have been described as hypersensitive, hypermoral. Andy Anderson, who works at the Carousel, will swear I never took calls for prostitutes at the place.

SUNDAY: Final question and answers.

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